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POSZ LAW GROUP, PLC
12040 SOUTH LAKES DRIVE
SUITE 101
RESTON, VA 20191

EXAMINER	
KRAIG, WILLIAM F	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/790,211	AOKI, TAKAAKI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	William Kraig	2815	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *26 June 2007*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,2,4-16 and 26-31* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1,2,4-16 and 26-31* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *02 March 2004* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. Claims 1, 5, 7 and 26-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aoki et al. (U.S. Patent # 6469345) in view of Ridley et al. (U.S. Patent # 6465325) and further in view of Tottori (U.S. Patent Publication # 2001/0009304).

Regarding claim 1, Aoki et al. discloses a method for manufacturing a semiconductor device comprising the steps of:

forming a trench (6) having an inner wall (inner wall of trench is covered with insulation film (7a) in Fig. 2B) in a substrate (1, 2, 3);

forming an insulation film (Fig. 2C (7a)) on the inner wall of the trench;

forming a conductive film (Fig. 2G, (8)) in the trench on the insulation film;

wherein the substrate (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (1, 2, 3)) is made of silicon (Aoki et al., Col. 2, Lines 48-50).

Aoki et al., however, fails to disclose annealing the substrate at an annealing temperature after the step of forming the conductive film.

Ridley et al., however, teaches the annealing (Col. 3, Lines 20-35 and Col. 4, Lines 29-40) of a substrate at an annealing temperature after the formation of a conductive gate electrode (Fig. 6 (42)).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the annealing step of Ridley et al. into the method of Aoki et al. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify the method of Aoki et al. in the above manner for the purpose of creating a more planar layer having a lower number of voids (Ridley et al., Col. 3, Lines 40-50).

Aoki et al., and Ridley et al., however, fail to specifically disclose the annealing temperature being, specifically, higher than 1150 degrees Celsius and equal to or less than 1200 degrees Celsius.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the temperature of the annealing process of Ridley et al. As is taught by Tottori, the temperature of the anneal is directly proportional to the degree of planarization in the BPSG film (Tottori, Paragraph 16). Therefore, said temperature is considered to be a result effective variable where the result is the modification of the level of planarity produced in the BPSG layer. (Ridley et al. discloses that a greater degree of planarity is desirable because "planar surfaces are easier to work with and generate fewer artifacts in further processing" (Ridley et al., Col. 1, Lines 25-30)). The claim to a specific temperature of the anneal therefore constitutes an optimization of ranges. *In re Huang*, 100 F.3d 135, 40 USPQ2d 1685, 1688 (Fed. Cir. 1996). While Ridley does caution (in Col. 3, Lines 30-35) that temperatures above 1100 degrees Celsius "may not prevent

autodoping of the phosphorus and boron", Ridley continues on to state that "a thicker or more effective barrier may permit a higher flow temperature". Therefore, given the thicker barrier layer deployed in the Aoki et al. reference, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been discouraged from using a higher anneal temperature.

Regarding the limitations "for improvement of reliability of the insulation film" and "so that a damage in the insulation film is removed at the annealing temperature", it is not necessary for the reference to disclose that the process of the reference is performed to achieve the same goals as applicant or to obtain the same advantages recognized by applicant. It is sufficient that the process suggested by the reference alone or in combination with the remaining references is encompassed by the instant claims.

Regarding claim 5, Aoki et al., Ridley et al. and Tottori disclose the method according to claim 1, wherein the conductive film is made of doped poly crystalline silicon (Aoki et al., Col. 3, Lines 7-8), and wherein the insulation film is made of silicon oxide and silicon nitride (Aoki et al., Col. 2, Lines 57-62).

Regarding claim 7, Aoki et al., Ridley et al. and Tottori disclose the method according to claim 1,

wherein the insulation film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2C (7a)) includes an oxide-nitride-oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a, 7b, 7c)) and upper (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7d)) and lower oxide films (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7e)),

wherein the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B (6)) includes a sidewall (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (side walls of trench (6), having oxide film (7a) disposed thereon)) and upper (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (upper portion of trench (6), having oxide film (7d) disposed thereon)) and lower portions (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (lower portion of trench (6), having oxide film (7e) disposed thereon)),

wherein the oxide-nitride-oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a, 7b, 7c)) is disposed on the sidewall of the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (side walls of trench (6), having oxide film (7a) disposed thereon)), the upper oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7d)) is disposed on the upper portion of the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (upper portion of trench (6), having oxide film (7d) disposed thereon)), and the lower oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7e)) is disposed on the lower portion of the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (lower portion of trench (6), having oxide film (7e) disposed thereon)),

wherein the oxide-nitride-oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a, 7b, 7c)) includes a silicon oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a)), a silicon nitride film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7b)) and another silicon oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7c)) (Aoki et al., Col. 2, Lines 57-62), and

wherein the upper (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7d)) and lower (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7e)) oxide films are made of silicon oxide (Aoki et al., Col. 2, Lines 66-67).

Regarding claim 26, Aoki et al., Ridley et al. and Tottori disclose the method according to claim 1, further comprising forming an oxide film (BPSG) (Aoki et al., Fig. 1

(9)) (Ridley et al., Fig. 6 (44, 48))) on the conductive film before the annealing of the substrate (Ridley et al., (Col. 3, Lines 20-35 and Col. 4, Lines 29-40)).

Regarding claim 27, Aoki et al., Ridley et al. and Tottori disclose the method according to claim 26, wherein the oxide film (BPSG) (Aoki et al., Fig. 1 (9)) (Ridley et al., Fig. 6 (44, 48))) covers the conductive film and the substrate (see Fig. 1 of Aoki et al. and Fig. 5 of Ridley et al.).

2. Claims 2, 4, 6, 8-11, 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aoki et al. in view of Ridley et al., further in view of Tottori and further in view of Inagawa et al. (U.S. Patent # 6455378).

Regarding claim 2, Aoki et al., Ridley et al. and Tottori disclose the method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

forming a source region (Aoki et al., Fig 2B, (4)) having a contact surface between the source region and the substrate (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B, (contact surface is bottom surface of source region (4))), which is disposed near the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B (6)) and is almost parallel to the substrate (see Fig. 2B),

wherein the insulation film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2C (7a)) includes an oxide-nitride-oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a, 7b, 7c)) and upper (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7d)) and lower oxide films (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7e)),

wherein the conductive film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (8)) in the trench provides a gate electrode (Aoki et al., Col. 4, Lines 26-28),

Aoki et al., Ridley et al. and Tottori, however, fail to disclose the gate electrode including a canopy for covering the upper oxide film so that the gate electrode has a T-shaped cross section, and the canopy of the gate electrode having an edge, which is disposed at a predetermined distance from an edge of an opening of the trench, and the predetermined distance being predetermined not to prevent the source region from forming.

Fig. 16(c) of Inagawa et al. teaches a gate electrode (3(3b)) including a canopy for covering the upper oxide film so that the gate electrode has a T-shaped cross section (See Fig. 16(c)), the canopy of the gate electrode having an edge (edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b)), said edge being disposed at a predetermined distance (distance between edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b) and edge of trench opening (see Fig. 16(c))) from an edge of an opening of the trench, wherein the predetermined distance (distance between edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b) and edge of trench opening (see Fig. 16(c))) is predetermined not to prevent the source region (6) from forming (Col. 11, Lines 59-60).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the gate electrode of Inagawa et al. into the method of Aoki et al., Ridley et al. and Tottori. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify

Aoki et al., Ridley et al. and Tottori in the above manner for the purpose of having more control over the depth of the source region (Inagawa et al., Col. 11, Lines 54-60).

Regarding claim 4, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose the method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

forming a source region (Aoki et al., Fig 2B, (4)) having a contact surface between the source region and the substrate (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B, (contact surface is bottom surface of source region (4))), which is disposed near the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B (6)) and is almost parallel to the substrate (see Fig. 2B),

wherein the insulation film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2C (7a)) includes an oxide-nitride-oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a, 7b, 7c)) and upper (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7d)) and lower oxide films (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7e)),

wherein the conductive film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (8)) in the trench provides a gate electrode (Aoki et al., Col. 4, Lines 26-28),

wherein the gate electrode includes a canopy for covering the upper oxide film so that the gate electrode has a T-shaped cross section, and the canopy of the gate electrode has an edge, which is disposed at a predetermined distance from an edge of an opening of the trench, and the predetermined distance being predetermined not to prevent the source region from forming (Fig. 16(c) of Inagawa et al. teaches a gate electrode (3(3b)) including a canopy for covering the upper oxide film so that the gate electrode has a T-shaped cross section

(See Fig. 16(c)), the canopy of the gate electrode having an edge (edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b)), said edge being disposed at a predetermined distance (distance between edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b) and edge of trench opening (see Fig. 16(c))) from an edge of an opening of the trench, wherein the predetermined distance (distance between edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b) and edge of trench opening (see Fig. 16(c))) is predetermined not to prevent the source region (6) from forming (Col. 11, Lines 59-60))

Regarding claim 6, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose the method according to claim 5, further comprising the step of:

forming a source region (Aoki et al., Fig 2B, (4)) having a contact surface between the source region and the substrate (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B, (contact surface is bottom surface of source region (4))), which is disposed near the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B (6)) and is almost parallel to the substrate (see Fig. 2B),

wherein the insulation film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2C (7a)) includes an oxide-nitride-oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a, 7b, 7c)) and upper (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7d)) and lower oxide films (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7e)),

wherein the conductive film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (8)) in the trench provides a gate electrode (Aoki et al., Col. 4, Lines 26-28),

wherein the gate electrode (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (3(3b))) includes a canopy for covering the upper oxide film so that the gate electrode has a T-shaped cross section (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c)),

wherein the canopy of the gate electrode has an edge (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b))), said edge being disposed at a predetermined distance (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (distance between edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b) and edge of trench opening (see Fig. 16(c)))) from an edge of an opening of the trench,

wherein the predetermined distance (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (distance between edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b) and edge of trench opening (see Fig. 16(c)))) is predetermined not to prevent the source region (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (6)) from forming (Inagawa et al., Col. 11, Lines 59-60).

Regarding claim 8, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose the method according to claim 7, further comprising the step of:

forming a source region (Aoki et al., Fig 2B, (4)) having a contact surface between the source region and the substrate (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B, (contact surface is bottom surface of source region (4))), which is disposed near the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B (6)) and is almost parallel to the substrate (see Fig. 2B),

wherein the conductive film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (8)) in the trench provides a gate electrode (Aoki et al., Col. 4, Lines 26-28),

wherein the gate electrode (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (3(3b))) includes a canopy for covering the upper oxide film so that the gate electrode has a T-shaped cross section (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c)),

wherein the canopy of the gate electrode has an edge (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b))), said edge being disposed at a predetermined distance (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (distance between edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b) and edge of trench opening (see Fig. 16(c)))) from an edge of an opening of the trench,

wherein the predetermined distance (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (distance between edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b) and edge of trench opening (see Fig. 16(c)))) is predetermined not to prevent the source region (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (6)) from forming (Inagawa et al., Col. 11, Lines 59-60).

Regarding claim 9, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose the method according to claim 1, wherein the device includes a cell region (Inagawa et al, Fig. 2 (area containing transistor cells (Q))) and a gate lead wire region (Inagawa et al., Fig. 2 (area containing gate line (3GL)), wherein the cell region (Inagawa et al, Fig. 2 (area containing transistor cells (Q))) includes a plurality of cells (Inagawa et al, Fig. 2 (Q)), each of which works as a transistor (Inagawa et al., Col. 6, Lines 6-14), and

wherein the gate lead wire region (Inagawa et al., Fig. 2 (area containing gate line (3GL)) includes a gate lead wire (Inagawa et al, Fig. 2 (3GL)) (Inagawa et al., Col. 6, Lines 59-60).

Regarding claim 10, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose the method according to claim 9, wherein the transistor (Inagawa et al, Fig. 2 (Q)) (Inagawa et al., Col. 6, Lines 6-14) is an N channel type MOSFET, a P channel type MOSFET or an IGBT (Aoki et al., Col. 2, Lines 44-47).

Regarding claim 11, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose a method for manufacturing a semiconductor device comprising the steps of:

forming a trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (6)) having an inner wall (Aoki et al. (inner wall of trench is covered with insulation film (7a) in Fig. 2B)) in a substrate (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (1, 2, 3));

forming an insulation film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a, 7b, 7c)) on the inner wall of the trench;

forming a gate electrode (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (8)) in the trench on the insulation film;

implanting an impurity into the substrate with using the gate electrode (Inagawa, Fig. 17 (3)) as a mask after the step of forming the gate electrode (Inagawa et al., Col. 11, Lines 44-51);

performing a thermal diffusion process for diffusing the impurity so that a source region adjacent to the trench and disposed on a surface of the substrate is formed (Inagawa et al., Col. 11, Lines 44-51) (Aoki et al., Col. 3, Lines 34-38); and

annealing (Ridley et al., Col. 3, Lines 20-35 and Col. 4, Lines 29-40) the substrate at an annealing temperature after the step of forming the conductive film (Ridley et al., Fig. 6 (42)),

wherein the substrate (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (1, 2, 3)) is made of silicon (Aoki et al., Col. 2, Lines 48-50).

Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al., however, fail to specifically disclose the annealing temperature being, specifically, higher than 1150 degrees Celsius and equal to or less than 1200 degrees Celsius.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the temperature of the annealing process of Ridley et al. As is taught by Tottori, the temperature of the anneal is directly proportional to the degree of planarization in the BPSG film (Tottori, Paragraph 16). Therefore, said temperature is considered to be a result effective variable where the result is the modification of the level of planarity produced in the BPSG layer. (Ridley et al. discloses that a greater degree of planarity is desirable because "planar surfaces are easier to work with and generate fewer artifacts in further processing" (Ridley et al., Col. 1, Lines 25-30)). The claim to a specific temperature of the anneal therefore constitutes an optimization of ranges. *In re Huang*, 100 F.3d 135, 40 USPQ2d 1685, 1688 (Fed. Cir. 1996). While Ridley does caution (in

Col. 3, Lines 30-35) that temperatures above 1100 degrees Celsius "may not prevent autodoping of the phosphorus and boron", Ridley continues on to state that "a thicker or more effective barrier may permit a higher flow temperature". Therefore, given the thicker barrier layer deployed in the Aoki et al. reference, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been discouraged from using a higher anneal temperature.

Regarding the limitations "for improvement of reliability of the insulation film" and "so that a damage in the insulation film is removed at the annealing temperature", it is not necessary for the reference to disclose that the process of the reference is performed to achieve the same goals as applicant or to obtain the same advantages recognized by applicant. It is sufficient that the process suggested by the reference alone or in combination with the remaining references is encompassed by the instant claims.

Regarding claim 13, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose the method according to claim 11,

wherein the insulation film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2C (7a)) includes an oxide-nitride-oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a, 7b, 7c)) and upper (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7d)) and lower oxide films (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7e)),

wherein the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B (6)) includes a sidewall (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (side walls of trench (6), having oxide film (7a) disposed thereon)) and upper (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (upper portion of trench (6), having oxide film (7d)

disposed thereon)) and lower portions (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (lower portion of trench (6), having oxide film (7e) disposed thereon)),

wherein the oxide-nitride-oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a, 7b, 7c)) is disposed on the sidewall of the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (side walls of trench (6), having oxide film (7a) disposed thereon)), the upper oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7d)) is disposed on the upper portion of the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (upper portion of trench (6), having oxide film (7d) disposed thereon)), and the lower oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7e)) is disposed on the lower portion of the trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (lower portion of trench (6), having oxide film (7e) disposed thereon)),

wherein the oxide-nitride-oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a, 7b, 7c)) includes a silicon oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7a)), a silicon nitride film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7b)) and another silicon oxide film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7c)) (Aoki et al., Col. 2, Lines 57-62), and

wherein the upper (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7d)) and lower (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (7e)) oxide films are made of silicon oxide (Aoki et al., Col. 2, Lines 66-67).

Regarding claim 14, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose the method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of:

forming a source region (Aoki et al., Fig 2B, (4)) having a contact surface between the source region and the substrate (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B, (contact surface is bottom surface of source region (4))), which is disposed near the

trench (Aoki et al., Fig. 2B (6)) and is almost parallel to the substrate (see Fig. 2B),

wherein the conductive film (Aoki et al., Fig. 2H (8)) in the trench provides a gate electrode (Aoki et al., Col. 4, Lines 26-28),

wherein the gate electrode (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (3(3b))) includes a canopy for covering the upper oxide film so that the gate electrode has a T-shaped cross section (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c)),

wherein the canopy of the gate electrode has an edge (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b))), said edge being disposed at a predetermined distance (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (distance between edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b) and edge of trench opening (see Fig. 16(c)))) from an edge of an opening of the trench,

wherein the predetermined distance (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (distance between edge of gate electrode (3(3b)) coincident with layer (2b) and edge of trench opening (see Fig. 16(c)))) is predetermined not to prevent the source region (Inagawa et al., Fig. 16(c) (6)) from forming (Inagawa et al., Col. 11, Lines 59-60).

Regarding claim 29, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose the method according to claim 11, further comprising forming an oxide film (BPSG) (Aoki et al., Fig. 1 (9)) (Ridley et al., Fig. 6 (44, 48))) on the conductive film before the annealing of the substrate (Ridley et al., (Col. 3, Lines 20-35 and Col. 4, Lines 29-40)).

Regarding claim 30, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose the method according to claim 29, wherein the oxide film (BPSG) (Aoki et al., Fig. 1 (9)) (Ridley et al., Fig. 6 (44, 48))) covers the conductive film and the substrate (see Fig. 1 of Aoki et al. and Fig. 5 of Ridley et al.).

3. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aoki et al. in view of Ridley et al., in view of Tottori, further in view of Inagawa et al., and further in view of Pan et al. (U.S. Patent # 6159781).

Regarding claim 15, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose disclose the method according to claim 14, but fail to disclose the distance between the edge of the canopy and the edge of the opening of the trench being, specifically, in a range between 0.05 micrometers and 0.1 micrometers.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to cause the distance between the edge of the canopy and the edge of the opening of the trench to be in a range between .05 micrometers and .1 micrometers. The claim to the specified range in the distance between the edge of the canopy and the edge of the opening on the trench constitutes an optimization of ranges. *In re Huang*, 100 F.3d 135, 40 USPQ2d 1685, 1688 (Fed. Cir. 1996). The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. in the above manner for the purpose of decreasing gate capacitance (Pan et al., Col. 1, Lines 35-40).

4. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aoki et al. in view of Ridley et al., in view of Tottori, further in view of Inagawa et al., and further in view of Poplevine (U.S. Patent # 6218866).

Regarding claim 12, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose the method according to claim 11, and the annealing temperature being 1200 degrees Celsius, but fail to disclose the temperature at which the thermal diffusion process is performed or the annealing temperature in the step of annealing being higher than the process temperature in the step of performing the thermal diffusion process.

Poplevine et al. teaches the formation of a well region wherein a thermal diffusion process with a process temperature of 900-1150 degrees Celsius is employed (Poplevine et al., Col. 8, Lines 8-22).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the process temperature of the thermal diffusion process of Poplevine et al. into the method of Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. in the above manner for the purpose of knowing at what temperature to perform the thermal diffusion.

5. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aoki et al. in view of Ridley et al., in view of Tottori, further in view of Inagawa et al., and further in view of Narwankar et al. (U.S. Patent # 6218300).

Regarding claim 16, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose disclose the method according to claim 11, but fail to disclose the substrate being annealed in an inert gas atmosphere in the step of annealing.

Narwankar et al. teaches a method of annealing wherein an inert gas is included in the anneal gas stream (Narwankar et al., Col. 6, Lines 30-35)

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the inert gas method of Narwankar et al. into the method of Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to modify Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. in the above manner for the purpose of preventing recombination of the active atomic species (Narwankar et al., Col. 6, Lines 30-35).

6. Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aoki et al. in view of Ridley et al., further in view of Tottori and further in view of Van Cleemput (U.S. Patent Publication # 2002/0052119).

Regarding claim 28, Aoki et al., Ridley et al. and Tottori disclose the method according to claim 27, but fail to specifically disclose the annealing of the substrate being performed for a predetermined time in a range between 10 minutes and 30 minutes.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the anneal time of Aoki et al., Ridley et al. and Tottori. As is taught by Van Cleemput, the length of time of the anneal is directly proportional to the degree of planarization in the BPSG film

(Van Cleemput, Paragraph 9). Therefore, said time is considered to be a result effective variable where the result is the modification of the level of planarity produced in the BPSG layer. (Ridley et al. discloses that a greater degree of planarity is desirable because "planar surfaces are easier to work with and generate fewer artifacts in further processing" (Ridley et al., Col. 1, Lines 25-30)). The claim to a specific length in time of the anneal therefore constitutes an optimization of ranges. *In re Huang*, 100 F.3d 135, 40 USPQ2d 1685, 1688 (Fed. Cir. 1996).

7. Claim 31 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aoki et al. in view of Ridley et al., in view of Tottori, further in view of Inagawa et al., and further in view of Van Cleemput (U.S. Patent Publication # 2002/0052119).

Regarding claim 31, Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. disclose disclose the method according to claim 30, but fail to specifically disclose the annealing of the substrate being performed for a predetermined time in a range between 10 minutes and 30 minutes.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the anneal time of Aoki et al., Ridley et al., Tottori and Inagawa et al. As is taught by Van Cleemput, the length of time of the anneal is directly proportional to the degree of planarization in the BPSG film (Van Cleemput, Paragraph 9). Therefore, said time is considered to be a result effective variable where the result is the modification of the level of planarity produced in the BPSG layer. (Ridley et al. discloses that a greater degree of planarity is desirable because "planar surfaces are easier to work with and

generate fewer artifacts in further processing" (Ridley et al., Col. 1, Lines 25-30)). The claim to a specific length in time of the anneal therefore constitutes an optimization of ranges. *In re Huang*, 100 F.3d 135, 40 USPQ2d 1685, 1688 (Fed. Cir. 1996).

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to all claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The cited art discloses similar semiconductor devices.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William Kraig whose telephone number is 571-272-8660. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ken Parker can be reached on 571-272-2298. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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WFK
8/23/2007

EUGENE LEE
PRIMARY EXAMINER